

NOTE

Coptotermes crassus Ping Preoccupied by *C. crassus* Snyder
Renamed *C. pingi* (Isoptera: Rhinotermitidae)

In the course of compiling a list of species of the Isoptera of the world, an unusual taxonomic mistake was discovered. A newly described termite from China of the genus *Coptotermes* was given the specific name *crassus* (Ping, Z. 1985. Eight new species of the genus *Coptotermes* and *Reticulitermes* from Guangdong Province, China. *Entomotaxonomia* 7(4): 317–328 (pp. 319–320, 327, fig. 3A–E)). Unfortunately, the name *Coptotermes crassus* is already occupied by a Neotropical species (Snyder 1922. *Proc. U.S. Natl. Mus.* 61: 1–32 (pp. 21–22, fig. 6)). Thus according to Article 60(a) of ICZN (Ride et al. 1985. *Internatl. Code Zool. Nomen.* 3rd ed., Univ. Cal. Press, Berkeley, 338 pp.) *Coptotermes crassus* Ping is a junior homonym and must be rejected. Since Ping placed *crassus* directly in the genus *Coptotermes*, i.e. this combination did not arise from revision, *C. crassus* Ping 1985 is known as an objectively invalid primary junior homonym. Barring the possible availability of other names, a replacement name (*nomen novum*) with its own author and date needs to be designated (Article 60(c)). There is no reason to suspect that *C. crassus* Snyder and *C. crassus* Ping are synonymous—neither on the basis of morphology nor on the basis of geographic distribution (Araujo 1977. *Catalogo dos Isoptera do Nova Mundo*. Academia Brasileira de Ciencias, Rio de Janeiro). The only possible available name for a *Coptotermes* from that

area is *hongkonensis* Oshima (Oshima 1914. *Annot. Zool. Jap.* 8: 553–585 (pp. 559–560, pl. IX, fig. 5)) which was sunken into synonymy with *Coptotermes formosanus* Shiraki. However, the ranges of all the measurements given by Oshima for *hongkonensis* are outside of those given for *crassus* Ping. Other details of the descriptions and illustrations also do not match. The right soldier mandible of *crassus* Ping is strongly curved toward the tip while it is relatively straight, “saber-shaped,” in the photograph of *hongkonensis*. The soldier gula is strongly contracted in the middle in *crassus* Ping while only “slightly contracted at middle” in *hongkonensis*. The labrum reaches well beyond the middle of the soldier mandibles in *crassus* Ping while Oshima states that in *hongkonensis* it is “scarcely reaching the middle of the mandibles.” Therefore, since *C. crassus* Ping cannot be referred to *C. hongkonensis*, and since there are no other available names from that area I propose the new name: *Coptotermes pingi* Myles *Nomen Novum* = *Coptotermes crassus* Ping 1985.

It is appropriate to rename this species after Dr. Ping Zhengming in recognition of his substantial contributions to termite taxonomy in China.

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